

half-delighted, and ran into the house red as a peony and hoping that Abel really would cherish that strange souvenir he had so craved.

Humble, self-deprecatory, Abel Drake had ever considered that he was fairly unworthy the beautiful girl, to him a goddess. He compared himself despairingly with the self-important young men he met. He began to believe that Alice had liked him as a friend, but beyond that—she had shrunk from paying the penalty of the red ear of corn. The realization of this wounded his sensitive nature and discouraged all love pretensions.

It was the third day after the husking bee that Alice, busy about the kitchen, was startled and then terrified as a neighbor's boy about 8 years of age came rushing in at the door, his face colorless and his eyes a-stare with fright.

"Oh, Miss Alice!" he bolted out—"little Ina!"

"My little sister—what of her, quick! Has she come to any harm?" cried Alice, her mind taking vivid alarm.

"She was playing boat with a tub," panted forth her informant. "It tipped over! Drown-ded!" was the ominous concluding word.

With a wild shriek Alice dashed toward the river which bounded the rear of the lot. She saw people rushing down the shore, two forms struggling in midstream to reach dry land. She saw a man gain it, drop his dripping burden, reel and sink prostrate.

Alice arrived breathless and anguished at the scene of the rescue, to see little Ina, scared and trembling, but unhurt and alive, and she gathered her in her arms with a choking sob. Amid the confused bable of buzzing voices she made out that the man who had rescued her little sister had gone through a terrible struggle in getting out of the swift river current and several men were striving to restore him to consciousness.

Alice uttered a sharp cry as she glanced down at the inanimate form—it was that of Abel Drake.

"Oh, he is not dead—tell me! tell me!" quavered Alice, and then as the man kneeling beside Alice unloosed his collar he announced:

"Give him air. He is only exhausted."

Then Alice thrilled. In folding back the collar of the prostrate man a ribbon about his neck was disclosed. As it was disengaged, attached to its end Alice saw the souvenir, the red ear of corn.

"Give it to me!" burst forth Alice, and then shrank within herself; but, with a wondering look, the man who had disengaged the souvenir obeyed her bidding. She clasped it and the rescued Ina closer to her bosom and drew back from the anxious circle and did not leave the spot until it was announced that Abel had recovered, but was still weak, and a vehicle was brought to send him home.

Half a dozen times that day Alice sent a messenger to receive almost hourly bulletins as to the condition of Abel. The reports were encouraging. A grateful, happy girl, some new spirit of emotion seemed borne into her through that day's exciting occurrences.

Her whole being glowed as, about noon the next day, the gate clicked and Abel Drake, looking somewhat pale but otherwise apparently none the worse for his experience of the previous day, entered the garden.

Alice greeted him with a genuine welcome of joy and gratitude.

"You are so kind to come to—relieve our anxiety," she said. "Why, even little Ina has been longing to see you and thank you for your great bravery."

"It was fortunate I was at hand when the tub upset," said Abel. "I missed something when I recovered—the souvenir. I understand you have it. I am quite lonesome without it."

Alice flushed and trembled. She